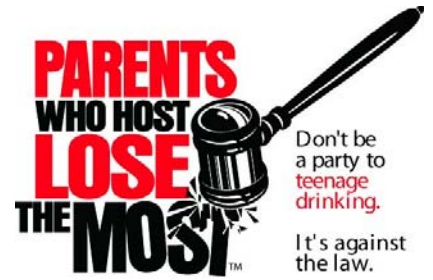


SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]
CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, Email]

Parents Who Host Lose the Most®
If You're Hosting a Party for Your Teens This Summer, Keep it Alcohol-Free

[Local Leader/Organization] announced today they are joining with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and other state and local highway safety and law enforcement officials across the nation this summer to remind all parents about the dangers of underage drinking and driving.

"Every year, kids under the age of 21 consume alcohol at parties hosted either in their own homes or in the homes of their friends and end up getting hurt or killed" said [Local Leader].

"Parents need to know that hosting parties where alcohol is being served to minors is not only illegal, but extremely dangerous for their kids, for others and for themselves given the legal liabilities they face.

"The bottom line is if you're hosting a party for teens this summer, be sure and keep it alcohol-free, because too often the *Parents Who Host Lose the Most*," [he/she] said.

[Local Leader] said motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teens in America – and nearly one-third of those deadly crashes are alcohol-related.

According to NHTSA, young drivers between 15 and 20 years old, account for less than seven percent of America's licensed drivers, yet are responsible for just over 20 percent of the nation's annual traffic crash fatalities.

In fact, NHTSA reports in 2003 that 7,884 drivers, ages 15-20 years old, were involved in fatal traffic crashes across the nation – killing a total of 8,666 persons.

While all states and the District of Columbia have 21-year old minimum drinking age laws, more than 20 percent of young people below the legal drinking age reported driving under the influence of alcohol, other drugs, or both, in the past year, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

In fact, nearly a third (31 percent) of the 15-20-year-old drivers who were killed in fatal crashes in 2003 had been drinking. Twenty-five percent of the drivers had a blood alcohol content (BAC) level of 0.08 percent and above. Seventy-four percent of the young drivers killed after drinking were not wearing their safety belts.

Where are these underage teens gaining access to so much alcohol? What they report may be surprising.

A recent survey commissioned by The Century Council, a national non-profit dedicated to fighting drunk driving and underage drinking, revealed that 65 percent of underage youth say they get alcohol from family and friends, meaning they get it from their parents, their friends' parents, older siblings or friends, with or without their permission.

Most troubling, some parents have become willing accomplices in planning teen parties and turning a blind eye to alcohol use in their own homes.

Between graduation parties, end-of-school celebrations and the free-time and fun of the summer season, some parents can be tempted to host parties for their minor-aged kids and their friends – sometimes with alcohol – with the mistaken belief that it is a safer option for their kids to drink at home than to drink somewhere else.

But **[Local Leader]** said, “If your underage teen drinks and drives, you may be legally liable for any damage, injury or death caused by your child. This is especially true if you hosted a party or provided the alcohol.”

Laws vary from state to state, but in many states, parents who break these laws could be forced to pay all medical bills and property damages in the case of a crash, and could also be sued for emotional pain and suffering when there is severe injury or death.

In some states, parents can even subject themselves to criminal prosecution. In one case in Pennsylvania, a parent was sentenced to a one-to-four-year prison term for involuntary manslaughter after three teens died in a drunk-driving crash following a party the parent hosted. In that case, the parent did not buy the alcohol consumed at the party, but knowingly permitted the teens to drink the alcohol that was brought in by others.

“Adult-supervised parties in which alcohol is served to minors are neither legal nor responsible,” said **[Local Leader]**. “Never be a party to underage drinking.”

[Local Leader] advises parents to help plan their teenagers' parties to ensure they are alcohol-free:

- Help make the guest list and limit the number to be invited. Send personal invitations to avoid the dangers of “open parties.”
- Put your phone number on the invitation and encourage calls from other parents to check on the event. Think about inviting some of the other parents to help during the party and to help you supervise to ensure no alcohol or drugs are present, and to help ask uninvited attendees to leave.
- At the party, limit access to a specified area of your property. Make sure there is plenty of food and soft drinks available. Make regular, unannounced visits to the party area throughout the evening.

- If your teen is attending a party at someone else's home, call the parent to verify the details and to ensure there will be adult supervision and no alcohol served.
- Know how your teen is getting to and from the party. And be aware when your teen arrives home. Seeing and kissing your child good night is one way to detect if alcohol or drugs were used.
- If you are going away for the weekend or on vacation and plan on leaving your teen home alone, be direct and set clear expectations, ground rules and consequences if you think your teen might be tempted to host a party. Notify your neighbors and ask them to keep an eye out – and leave the phone numbers that should be called in the event of a problem or an emergency.

Most importantly, **[Local Leader]** tells parents to talk honestly with their kids to make sure their kids know they are concerned for their safety.

“As responsible parents, don't be a party to teenage drinking. Always remember that you or any adult who serves alcohol to underage youth, or who is aware of it being served to underage youth on their property, may be legally responsible and liable for any damages that result,” said **[Local Leader]**.

For more information on the dangers of driving impaired, please visit www.stopimpaireddriving.org.

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